Seirei no Moribito

by Uehashi Nahoko, Futatsugi Saki, & Fujiwara Kamui

Chapter 9

The End

TheEndManga.wordpress.com

Always open to new freelancers
finishing off projects of their choosing!

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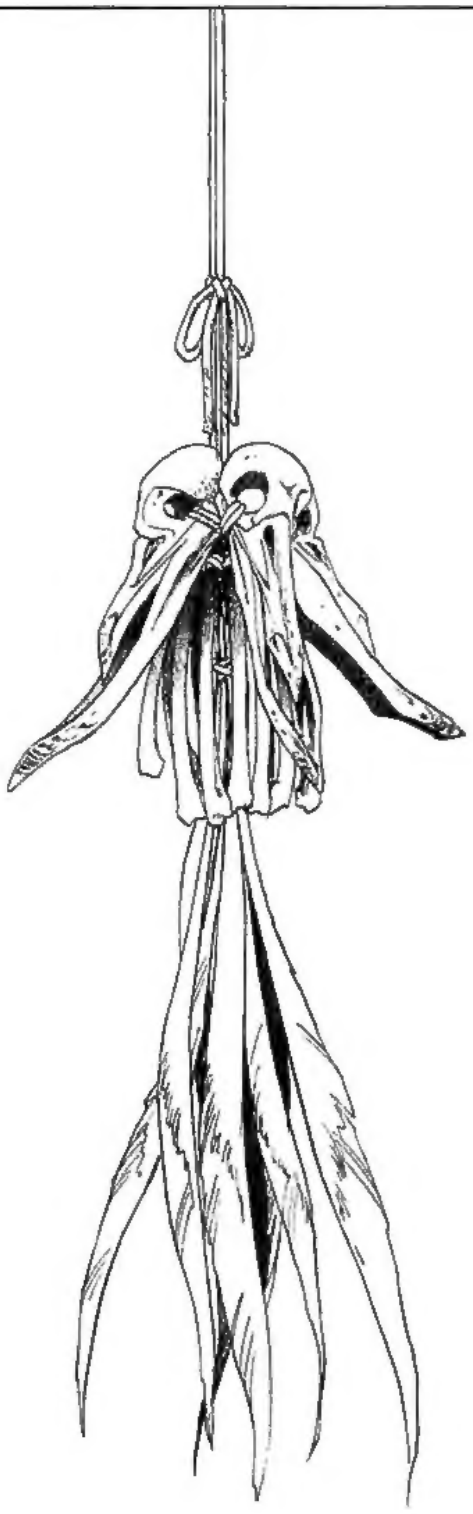


CHAPTER 9: THE SMALL STORYTELLER

GOOD THING IT'S JUST A FLESH WOUND... IF I HAD A BROKEN BONE IT WOULDN'T HAVE HEALED THIS QUICKLY.
.....
YOU HEAL FAST FOR YOUR AGE...
AH! I REMEMBER THIS ONE. AND THIS ONE, I WAS THE ONE WHO SEWED THIS UP TOO.
IDIOT!
DON'T THINK YOU CAN JUST TOUCH ME LIKE THAT! IT TICKLES.

……
YANK
……
FWIP
……
TUG
TAP TAP TAP
TAP TAP TAP
TAP TAP TAP

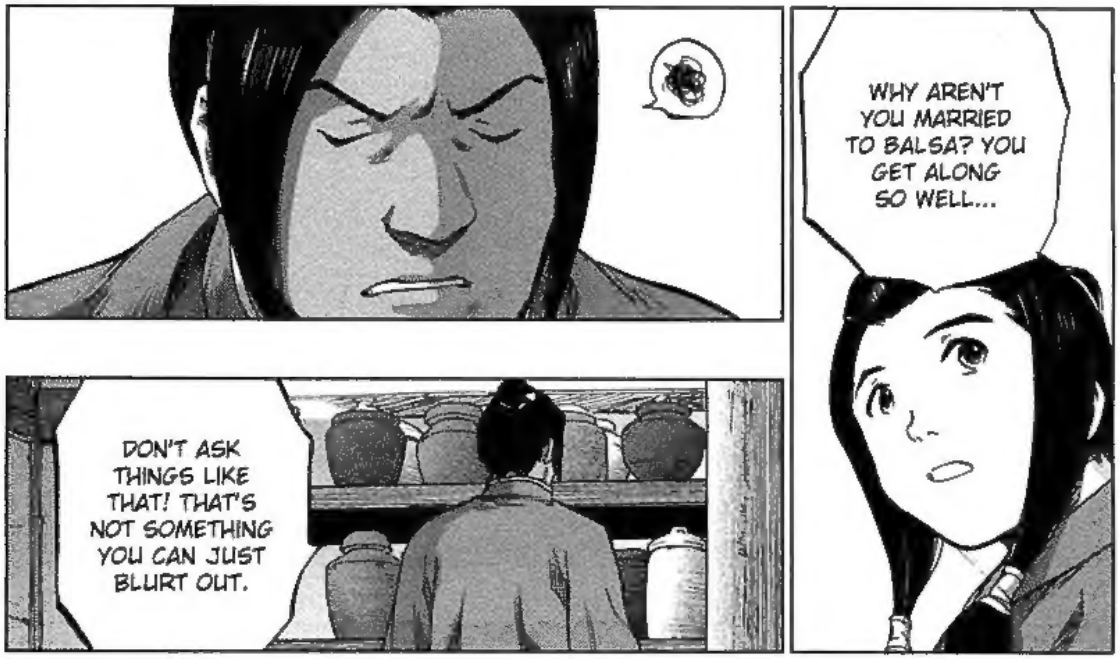
WHY ARE YOU SIGH-ING?

Haaa...

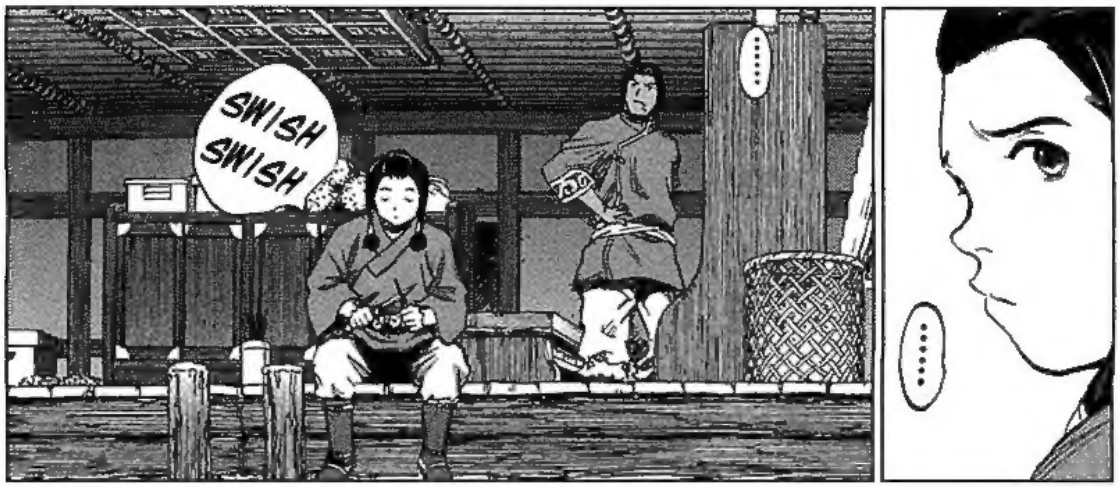
THUNK

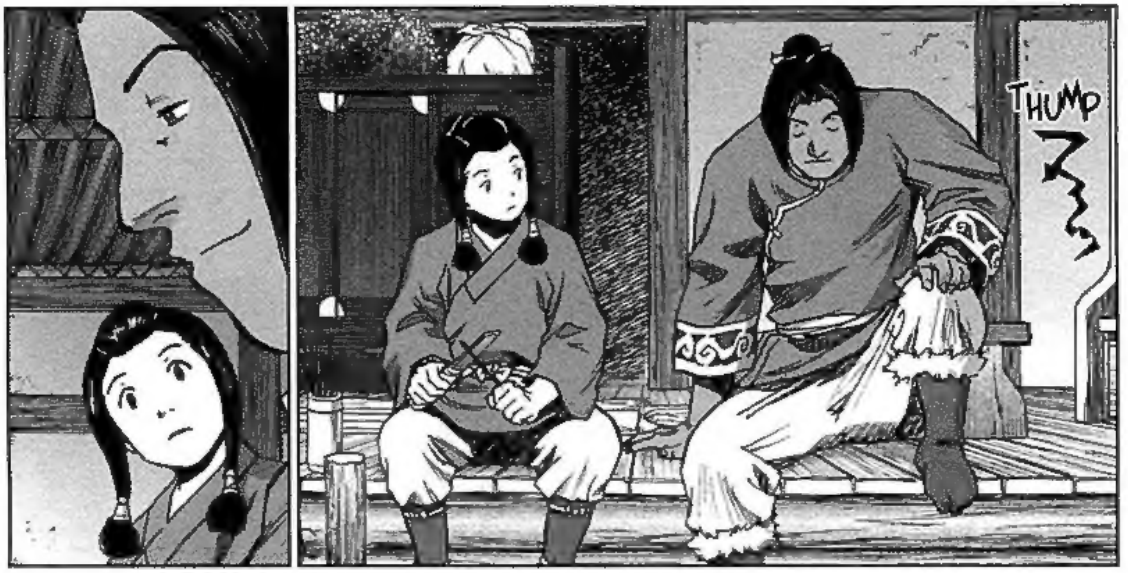
IF I DON'T WATCH WHERE MY HANDS ARE THEY'RE GONNA GET CUT OFF!
TAP

HM?
TANDA...


WHY AREN'T YOU MARRIED TO BALSA? YOU GET ALONG SO WELL...
DON'T ASK THINGS LIKE THAT! THAT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU CAN JUST BLURT OUT.

BUT...
DON'T ASK! AND ESPECIALLY NOT IN FRONT OF BALSA! PLEASE...

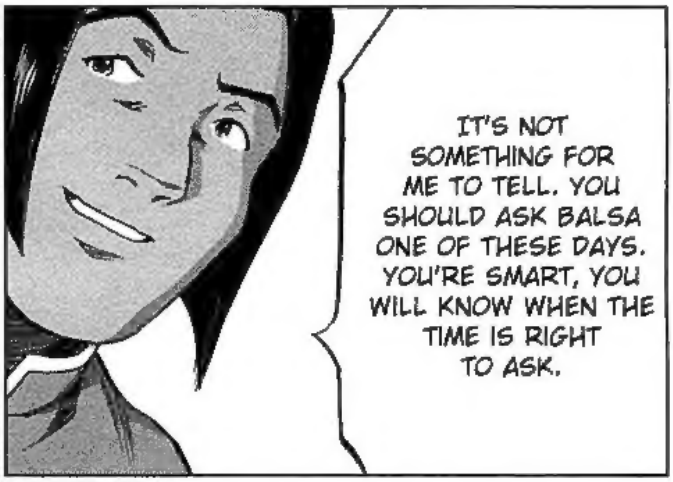

SWISH SWISH
.....
.....


THUMP

AND PART OF THAT IS BECOMING YOUR BODYGUARD AND PROTECTING YOU WITH HER LIFE.
BALSA IS ALREADY DEAD SET ON SOMETHING ELSE.

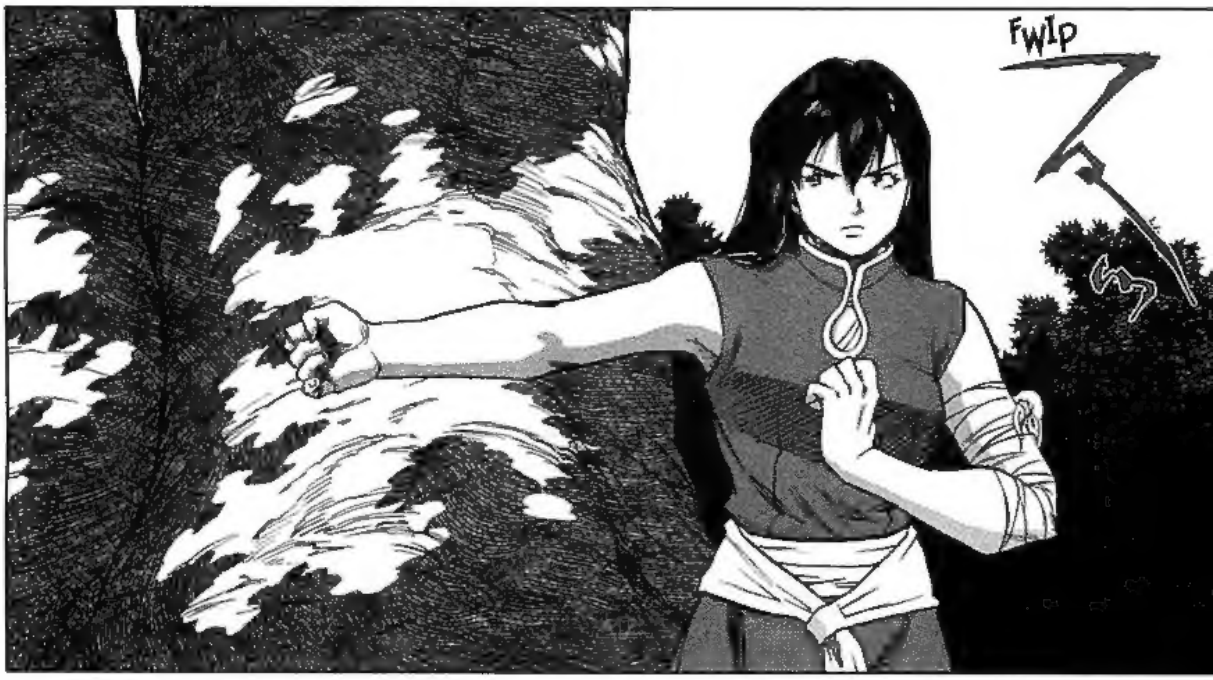
SHE IS DEAD SET ON... WHAT?
UNTIL THAT'S OVER, SHE WILL NEVER BE SOMEONE'S WIFE...

WHY?
TO PUT IT SIMPLY, SHE HAS SWORN TO SAVE 8 LIVES.


IT'S NOT SOMETHING FOR ME TO TELL. YOU SHOULD ASK BALSA ONE OF THESE DAYS. YOU'RE SMART, YOU WILL KNOW WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT TO ASK.

TRY TO BROACH THE TOPIC WHEN SHE'S IN THE MOOD TO REMINISCE ABOUT HER PAST...

.....


FWIP

THUMP
WHOOSH

PAH! PAH!

OWW!
.....

OF COURSE IT DOES.
IT STILL HURTS QUITE A BIT...

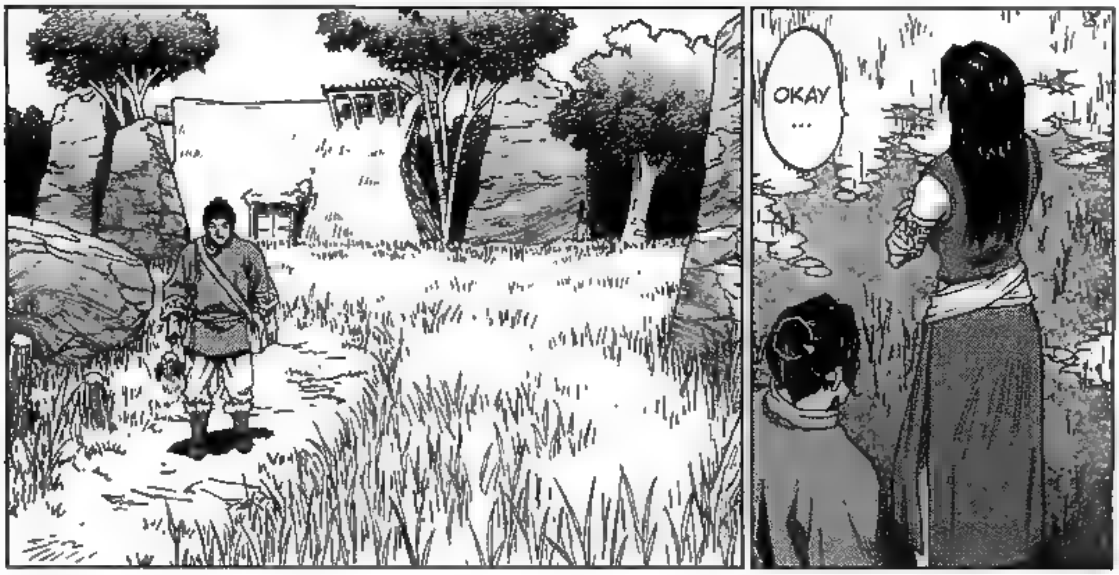
YOU'RE GOING TO ASK ABOUT THE NYUNGA RO IM?
HEY, I'M GOING TO MOUNT YASHIRO FOR A BIT. WHAT ABOUT YOU?

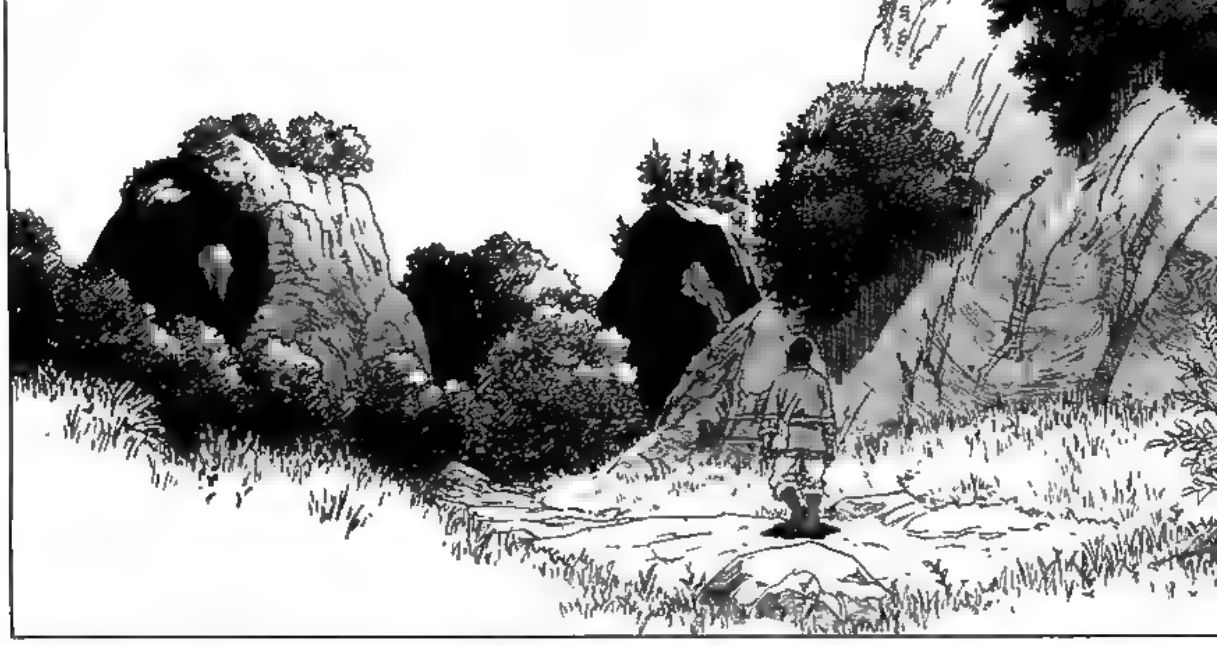
DO YOU WANT TO TAKE CHAGUM AND GO WITH ME?
I WAS LOOKING AROUND FOR ANYONE THAT MIGHT BE RELATED TO THE FRIEND OF MY GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT, AND I ENDED UP WITH A LEAD IN YASHIRO VILLAGE.
YEAH ...

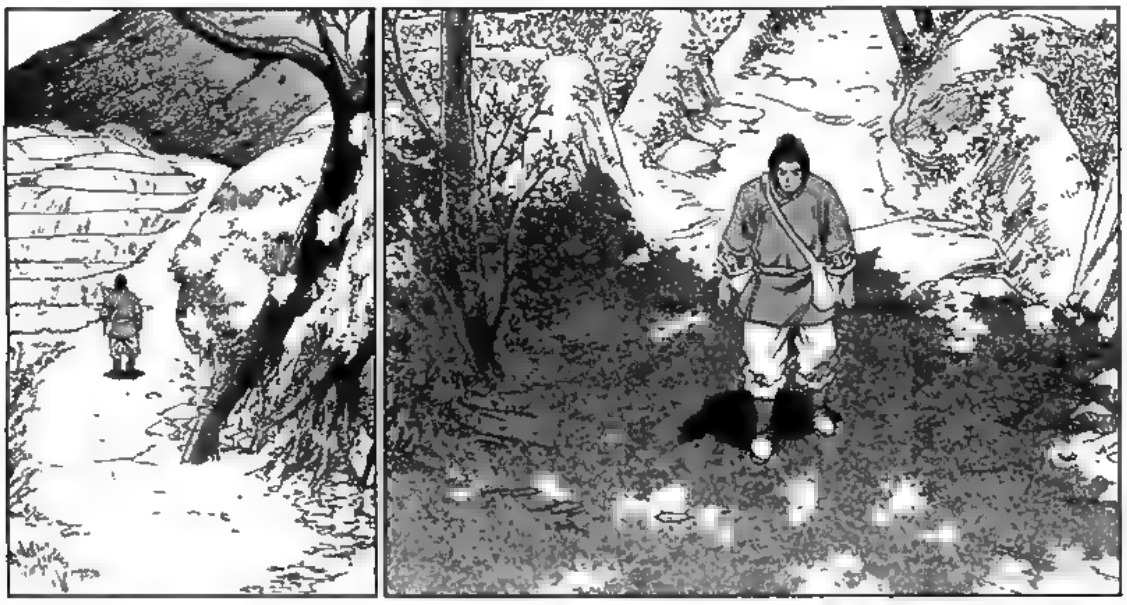
AND I'M EVEN MORE WORRIED WHEN HE'S ALONE. I'M THINKING OF TEACHING HIM SOME MARTIAL ARTS.
NO... I'LL STAY HERE. I'M STILL WORRIED ABOUT HAVING CHAGUM OUT AND ABOUT IN PUBLIC LIKE THAT.

SO THAT HE CAN DEFEND HIMSELF ON THE OFF CHANCE THAT HE FINDS HIMSELF ALONE.

IF I'M NOT BACK BY TONIGHT, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
OKAY, JUST TAKE SOME FOOD FROM MY STORAGE, THEN.

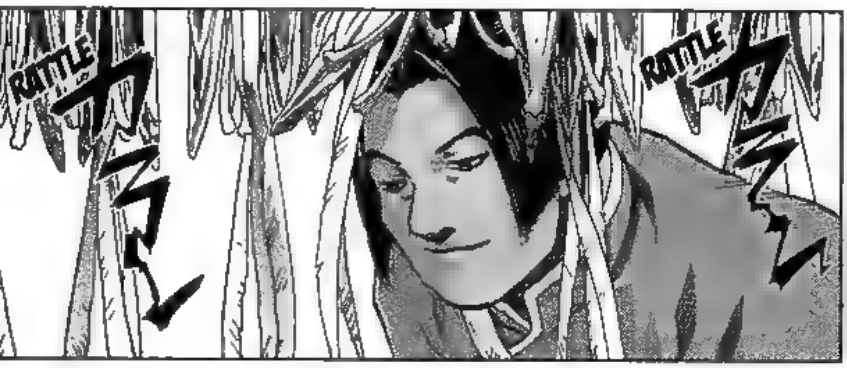

OKAY ...





I SHOULD BE NEAR-ING THE OUTSKIRTS NOW...

LOOK AT THAT ..
A ROPE MARKER ...

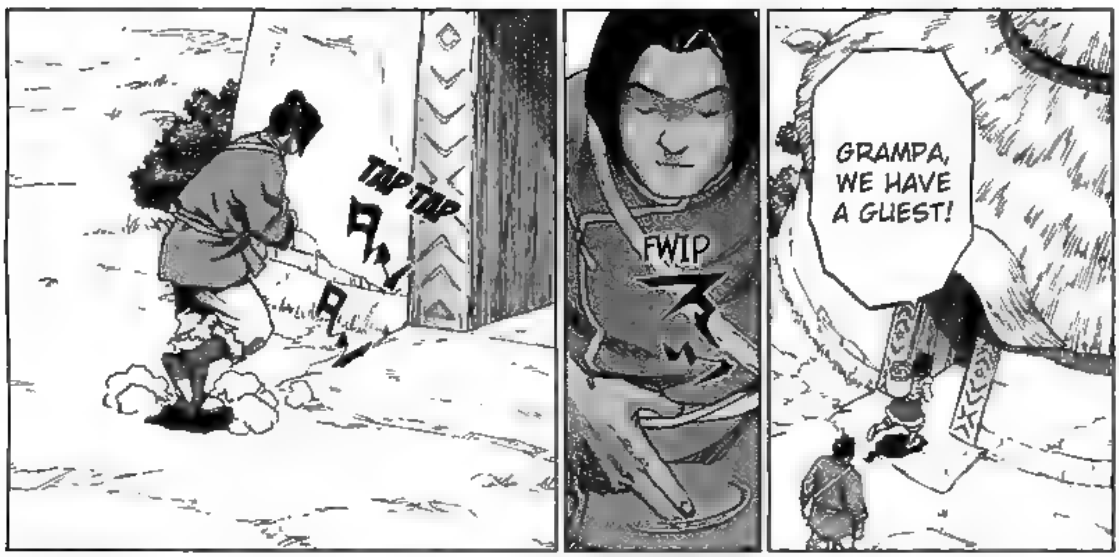

RATTLE
RATTLE

AS IS TRADI-TION...

I WONDER WHY THEY'RE NAJI BONES...

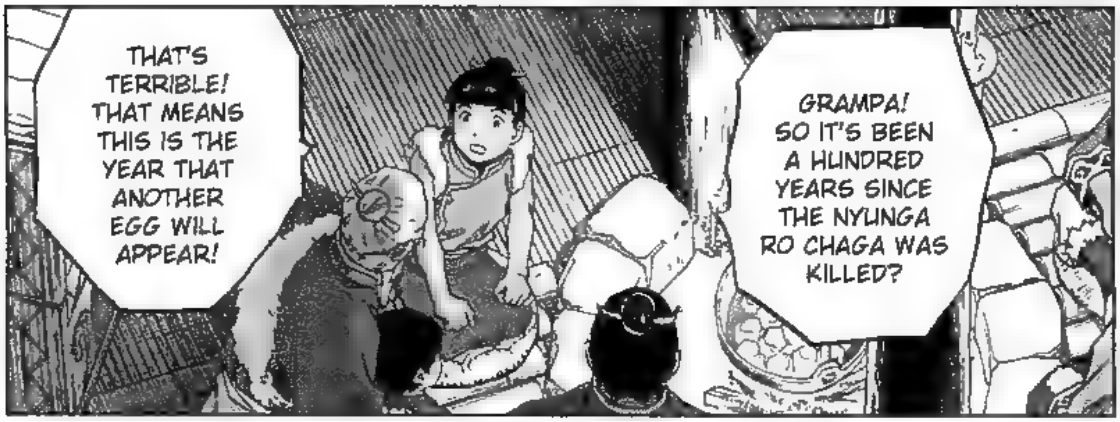
GRAMPA, I WANNA RING IT TOO!
UMF!
OKAY, I KNOW, I KNOW.
FLY, FLY NAJI! IF YOU REACH THE SEA THE RAIN WILL FALL AND THE RICE FIELDS WILL GROW!
THE NAJI'S WINGS ARE FASTER THAN MAGIC, AND FASTER THAN ANY CALAMITY.

AH, THAT'S RIGHT!
IT REFERS TO THE SONG OF THE MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL. I HOPE THEY HAVE A GOOD HARVEST THIS YEAR....
HI NINA. DID YOU GO TO THE RIVER TO WASH YOUR POTATOES?
AH! MISTER MEDICINE MAN!
!
!
YEP!


TAP TAP
FWIP
GRAMPA, WE HAVE A GUEST!

IT'S BEEN A WHILE! COME IN, COME IN...
WELL IF IT ISN'T TANDA!
I'M SORRY FOR INTRUDING, NOUYA-SAN.

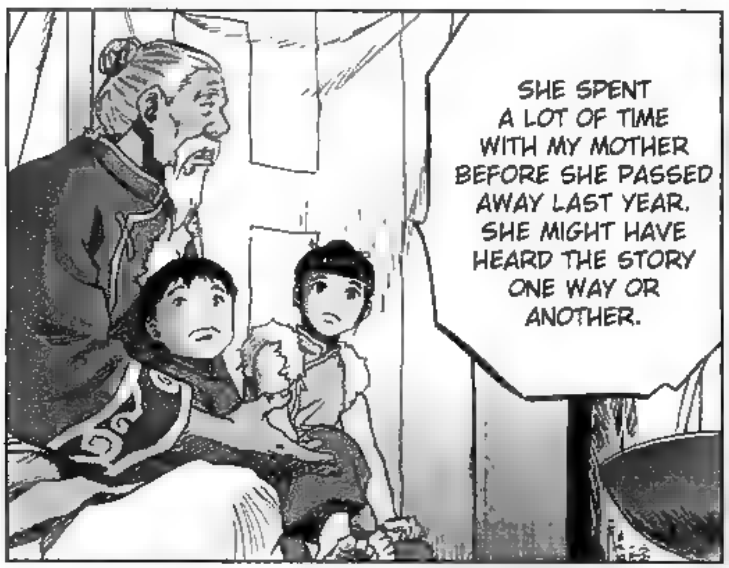
NYUNGA RO CHAGA?
HMM ...
YES ...
I DIDN'T LIKE THE STORY EITHER... WHICH IS WHY I DON'T KNOW IT WELL.
MY FATHER'S BROTHER CERTAINLY WAS THE GUARDIAN OF THE EGG. MY GRANDMOTHER DESCENDED INTO SADNESS EVERY TIME SHE REMEMBERED WHAT HAPPENED.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME... THAT WAS A HUNDRED YEARS AGO...
IF YOU ASKED THIS LAST YEAR, WHEN MY MOTHER WAS ALIVE, YOU WOULD HAVE GOTTEN MORE ANSWERS. SHE WAS THE TOWN'S STORYKEEPER... SHE WOULD HAVE KNOWN MORE ABOUT THAT WATER SPIRIT.


THAT'S TERRIBLE! THAT MEANS THIS IS THE YEAR THAT ANOTHER EGG WILL APPEAR!
GRAMPA! SO IT'S BEEN A HUNDRED YEARS SINCE THE NYUNGA RO CHAGA WAS KILLED?

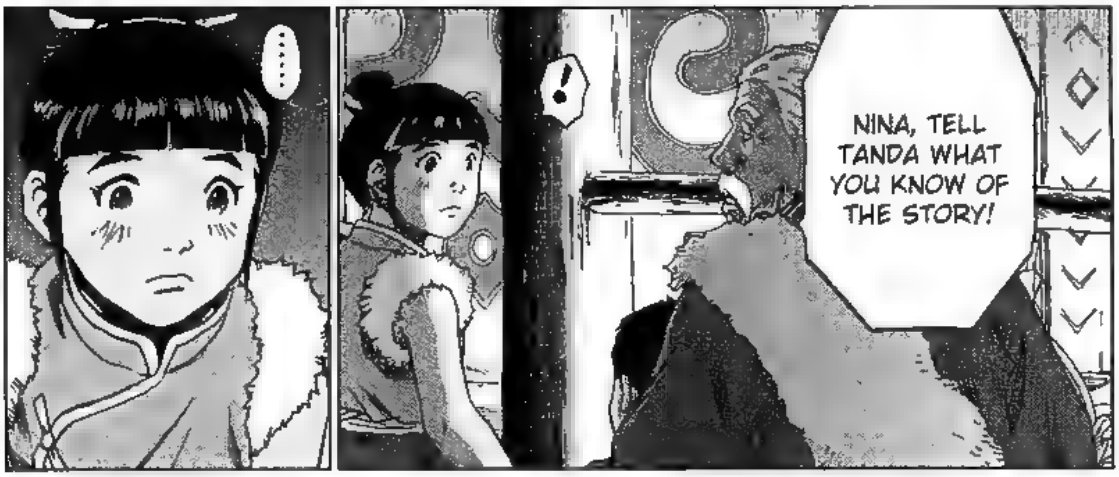
YOU SEEM TO KNOW A LOT ABOUT IT, NINA... HOW?

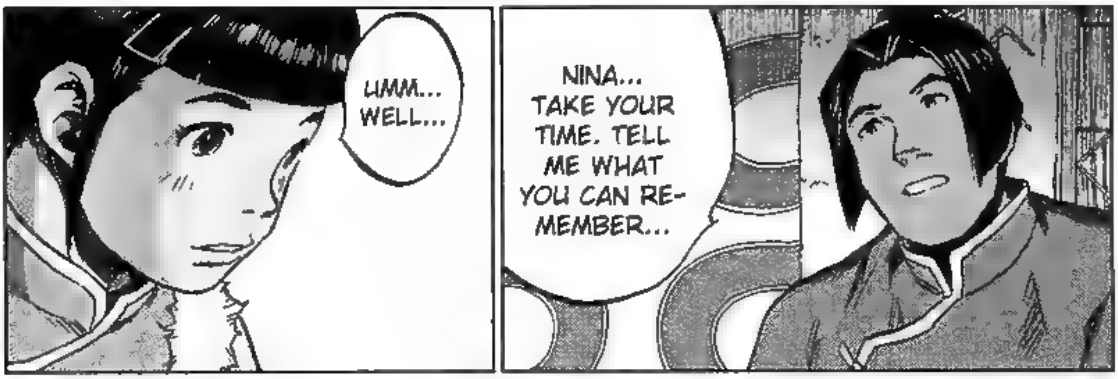
!!

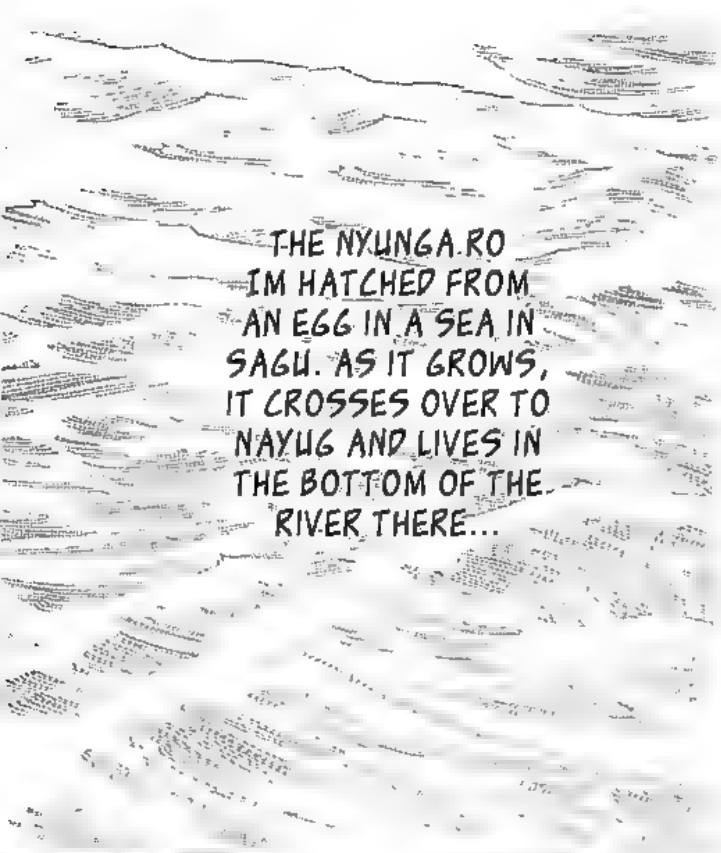
MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER TOLD ME THAT SCARY STORY.


SHE SPENT A LOT OF TIME WITH MY MOTHER BEFORE SHE PASSED AWAY LAST YEAR. SHE MIGHT HAVE HEARD THE STORY ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

PAT


……
!
NINA, TELL TANDA WHAT YOU KNOW OF THE STORY!


UMM... WELL...
NINA... TAKE YOUR TIME. TELL ME WHAT YOU CAN RE-MEMBER...

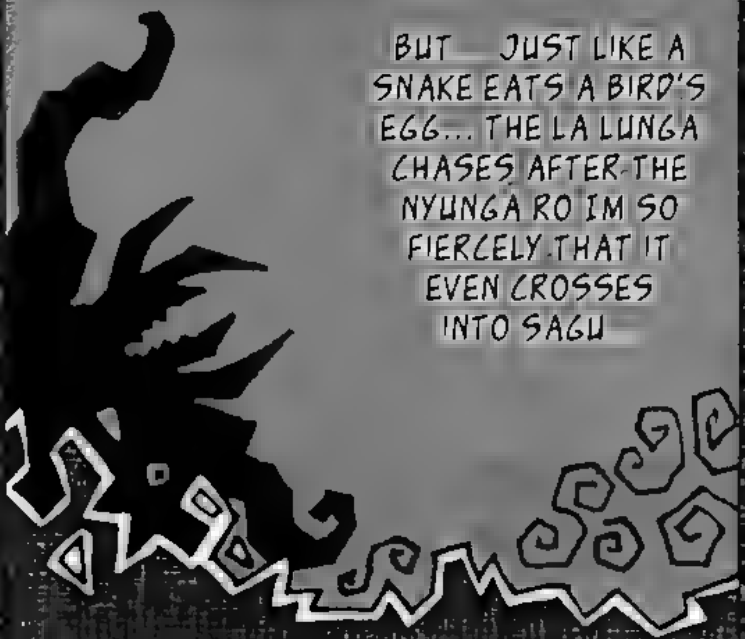

THE NYUNGA RO IM HATCHED FROM AN EGG IN A SEA IN SAGU. AS IT GROWS, IT CROSSES OVER TO NAYUG AND LIVES IN THE BOTTOM OF THE RIVER THERE...

IT WAS WHEN MY GREAT GRAND-FATHER'S OLDER BROTHER WAS VERY YOUNG... THE NYUNGA RO IM, THE WATER GUARDIAN, LAID AN EGG.

MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER TOLD ME IT LOOKED LIKE A HUGE SHELLFISH...
BUT AS IT GROWS INTO AN ADULT... IT STOPS BEING ABLE TO MOVE.
BUT THEN, AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS, THE NYUNGA RO IM LAYS ITS EGG AND DIES.
THE ENERGY THAT IT BREATHES OUT TURNS INTO THE CLOUDS THAT CAUSE THE RAIN TO FALL.
THE CLOUDS GRADUALLY DISAPPEAR AFTER THE NYUNGA RO IM DIES. BUT THE SUN REMAINS SHINING ON THE LAND.

THIS IS WHY THE YAKU HAVE DECIDED TO PROTECT THE EGG. TO MAKE SURE THAT THE NYUNGA RO IM IS BORN... TO HAVE THE CLOUDS RISE AGAIN... THIS IS HOW THE GUARDIAN OF THE SPIRIT CAME TO BE.

LONG LONG AGO, WHEN THE PEOPLE OF SAGU AND NAYUG GOT ALONG WELL THAT WAS HOW THINGS WERE.

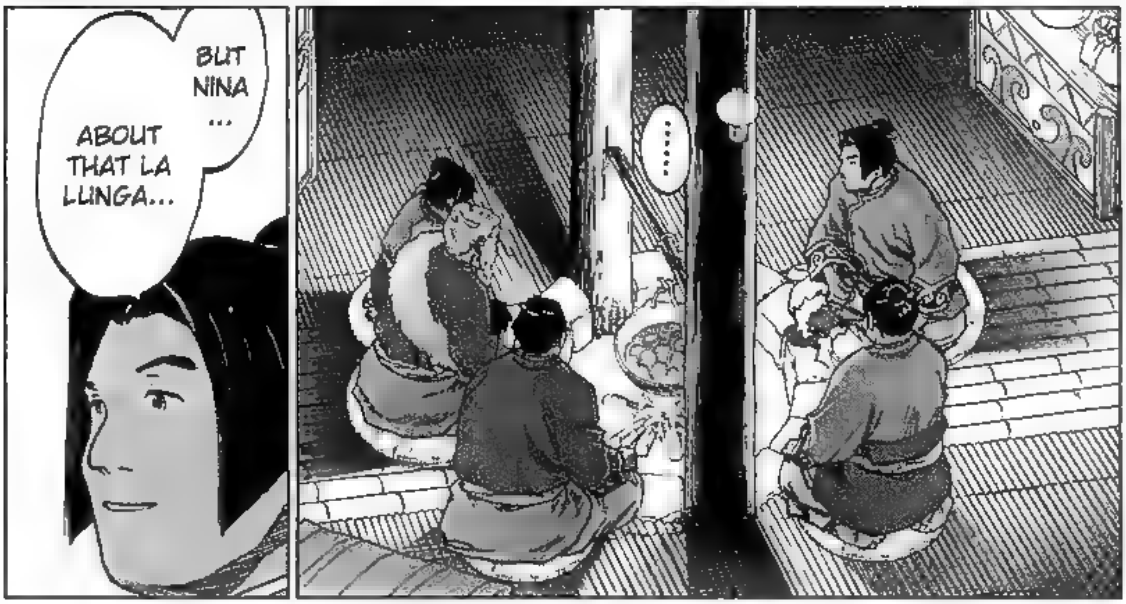


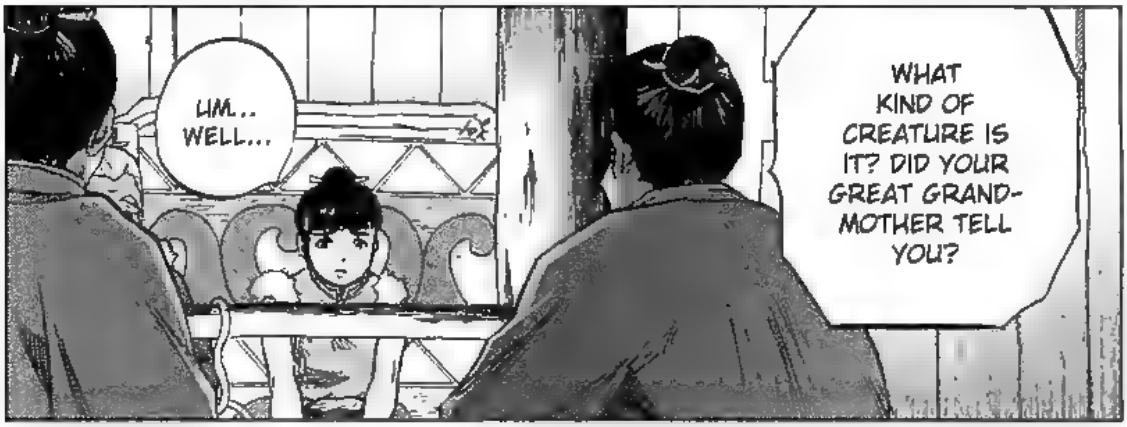
BUT... JUST LIKE A SNAKE EATS A BIRD'S EGG... THE LA LUNGA CHASES AFTER THE NYUNGA RO IM SO FIERCELY THAT IT EVEN CROSSES INTO SAGU

...HEY, NOW THAT A HUNDRED YEARS HAVE PASSED...
MY GREAT GRANDFATHER'S FATHER'S OLDER BROTHER WAS TORN RIGHT IN HALF BY THE LA LUNGA'S CLAWS!!

WILL THE LA LUNGA REMEMBER HOW THE NYUNGA RO CHAGA TASTED... AND COME HERE TO EAT US?!

WHEW
IT'S GOING TO BE FINE... THE EGGS OF THE NYUNGA RO IM ARE THE ONLY THING THAT THE LA LUNGA EATS...
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET EATEN, SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT...

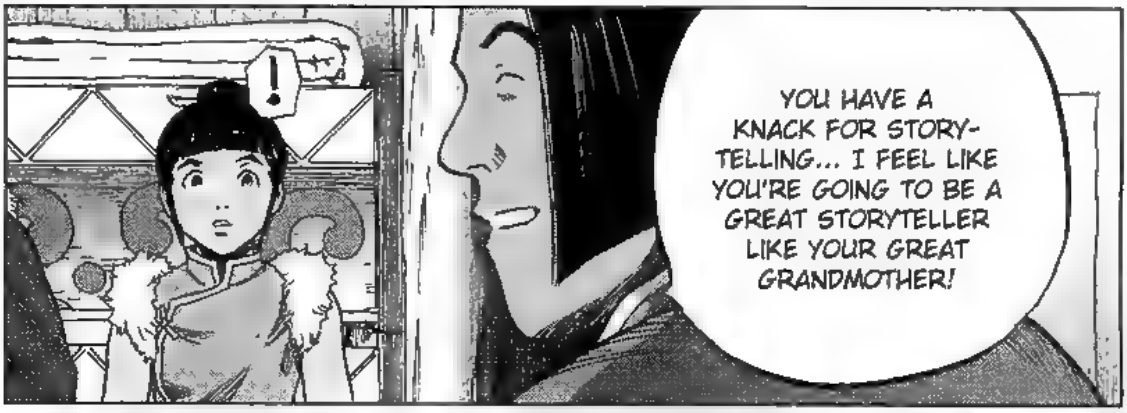

BUT NINA ...
ABOUT THAT LA LLINGA...
.....


UM... WELL...
WHAT KIND OF CREATURE IS IT? DID YOUR GREAT GRAND-MOTHER TELL YOU?

THEY WEREN'T ABLE TO SEE IT FOR THE LOOOONGEST TIME... BUT IT SUDDENLY APPEARED WHEN IT TORE APART THE NYUNGA RO CHAGA.
SHE TOLD ME THAT HER FATHER SAW IT...

SHIVER
SHE TOLD ME THAT HER FATHER REMEMBERED ITS HUGE CLAWS GLOWING...
IT REALLY IS A CREATURE OF NAYUG. THE LA LUNGA DIDN'T COME FROM THE EMPEROR'S HUNTERS...
.....
THAT'S WHAT I ALSO WANTED TO KNOW...
DID SHE TELL YOU WHAT ITS WEAKNESS IS?
BUT SHE TOLD ME THAT IF THEY KNEW THAT, THEY WOULD HAVE TOLD EVERYONE ALREADY, AND THE CHILD WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN KILLED.
.....
THAT'S TRUE...
NO...

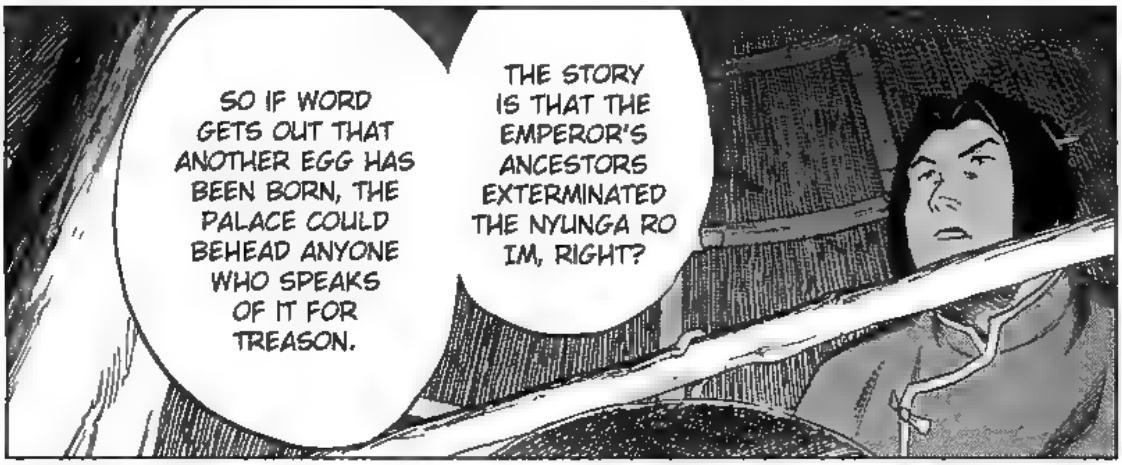
YOU'VE REALLY HELPED ME OUT!
OH NO, THANK YOU!


!
YOU HAVE A KNACK FOR STORY-TELLING... I FEEL LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO BE A GREAT STORYTELLER LIKE YOUR GREAT GRANDMOTHER!

TANDA... WHY ARE YOU ASKING THESE QUESTIONS NOW...?

IT'S JUST AS YOU'VE GUESSED. IT LOOKS LIKE THE NYUNGA RO IM HAS LAID ITS EGG... AND I WANT TO PROTECT IT.

WHY?
BUT I AM ASKING YOU... PLEASE DO NOT TELL OF THIS TO ANYONE.


THE STORY IS THAT THE EMPEROR'S ANCESTORS EXTERMINATED THE NYUNGA RO IM, RIGHT?
SO IF WORD GETS OUT THAT ANOTHER EGG HAS BEEN BORN, THE PALACE COULD BEHEAD ANYONE WHO SPEAKS OF IT FOR TREASON.

!!

OKAY?

YOU TOO, NINA!
OF COURSE!
TANDA, YOU MUST ALSO SWEAR NEVER TO TELL THIS TO ANYONE. DO NOT TELL OUR STORY TO THE OFFICIALS...
!
I'LL BE OFF...
I'M SORRY TO BRING EVERYONE'S SPIRITS DOWN...

I HEARD THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT YOUR WIFE. THIS SHOULD HELP WITH THE MORNING SICKNESS.
AH, I ALMOST FORGOT... IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT HERE ARE SOME HERBS.

WELL THEN...

THANK YOU.

AH...

?
TANDA-SAN! THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE I REMEMBERED!

GREAT GRAND-MA TOLD ME...
THAT THE LA LUNGA NEVER COMES DURING WINTER!

!
IT'S MOST LIKELY HIBERNATING... JUST LIKE THE MOUNTAIN CREATURES.

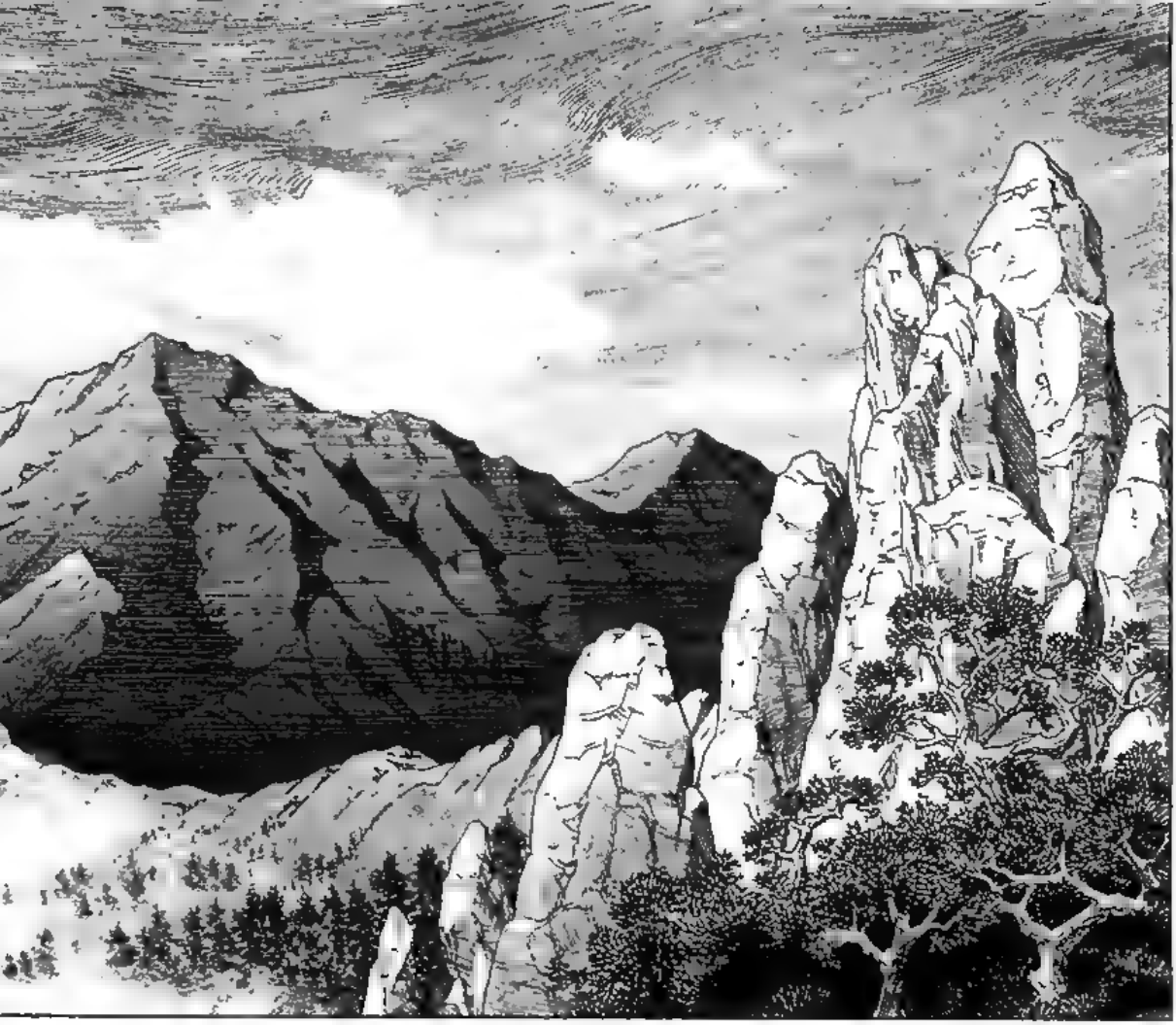
THAT'S RIGHT... MY FATHER'S OLDER BROTHER WAS KILLED DURING THE SUMMER SOLSTICE. MY GRANDMOTHER GRIEVED GREATLY... IF ONLY THE WINTER WOULD LAST FOREVER, SHE SAID...

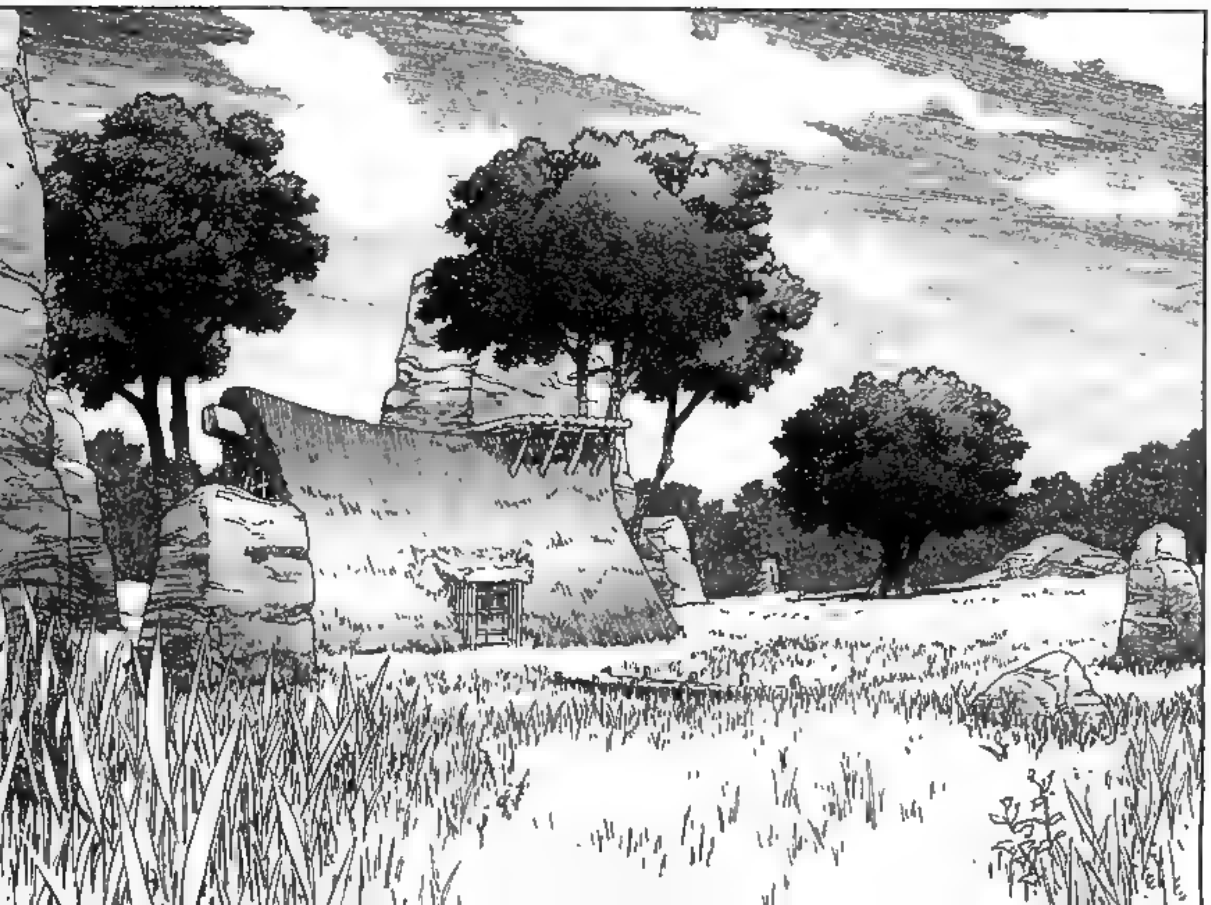
HEHE ...
YOU REMEM-BERED WELL, NINA! THAT WAS VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

AH...
IT'S SNOW-ING?!

!

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT I'M GLAD TO SEE SIGNS OF WINTER...



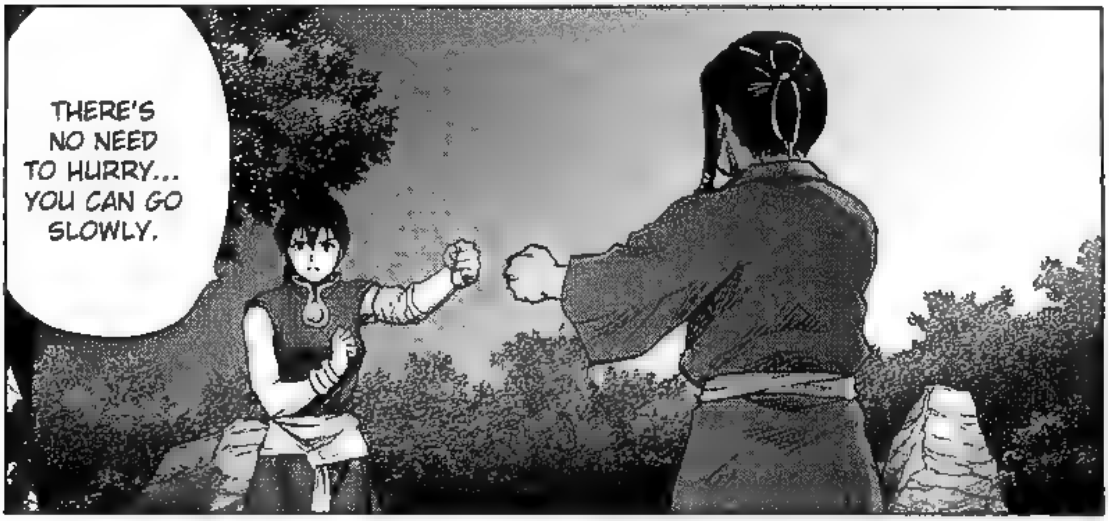


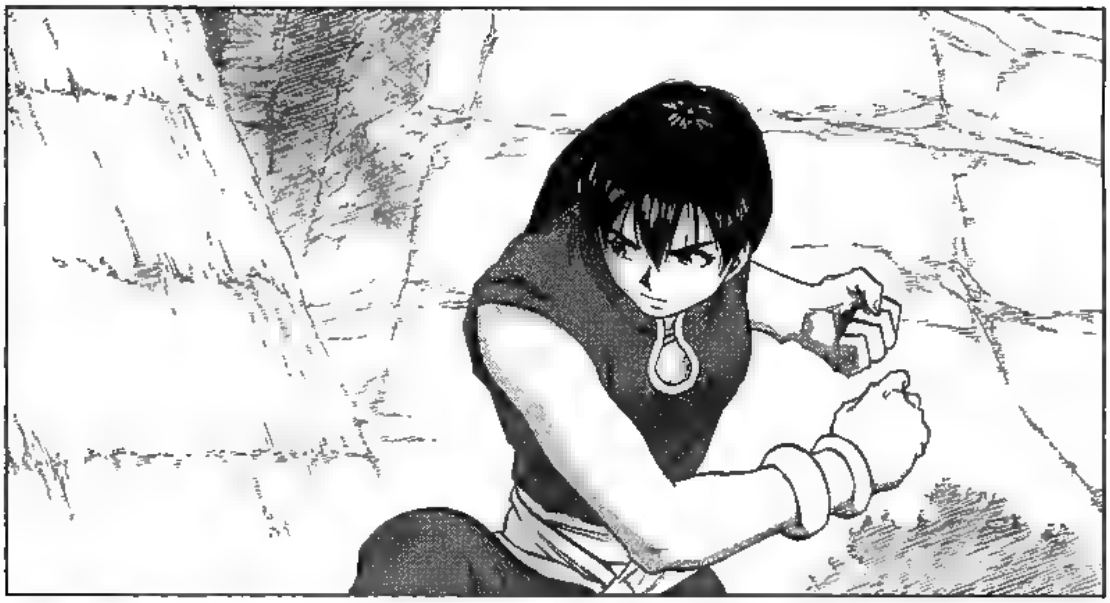
DOES IT HURT?

BREATHE SLOWLY, TIME IT WITH YOUR MOVE-MENTS.

Huff Huff
Huff Huff

INHALE


THERE'S NO NEED TO HURRY... YOU CAN GO SLOWLY.



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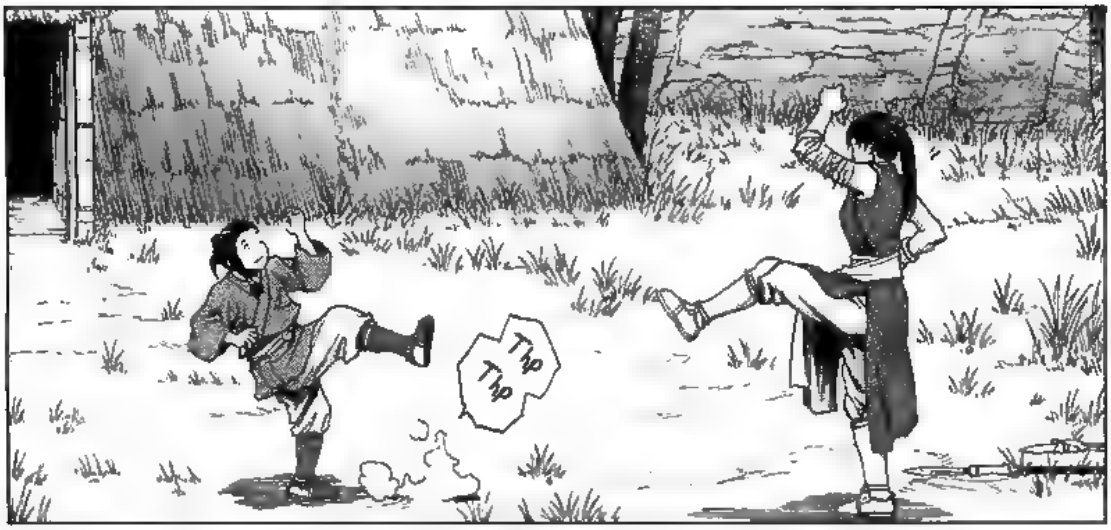
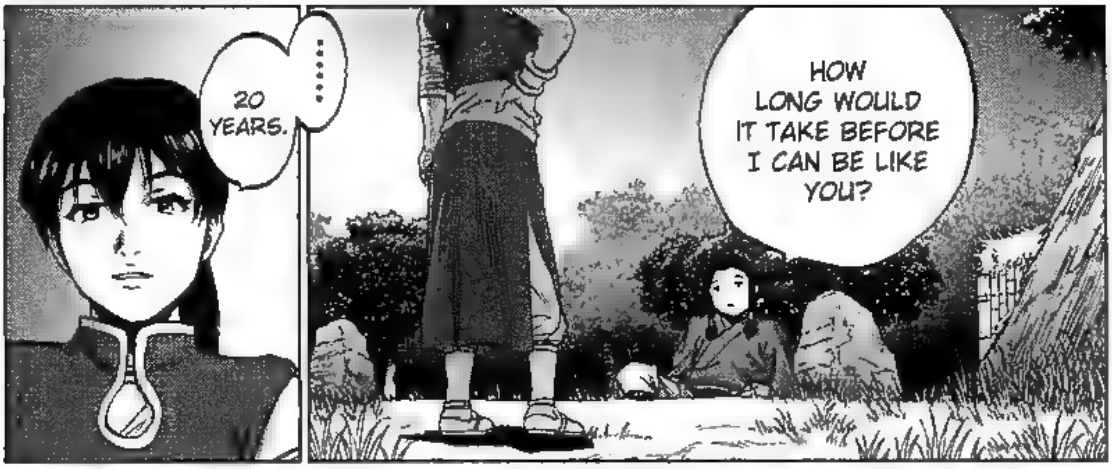

Thp
Thp

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE EVER EXERTED YOURSELF, ISN'T IT...
HMMM ...

THUD

Huff
Huff

BUT I AT LEAST WANT YOU TO BE ABLE TO MOVE A BIT WITHOUT LOSING YOUR BREATH.
YOUR BONES ARE STILL GROWING SINCE YOU'RE STILL YOUNG, SO I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO OVERDO IT.


20 YEARS.
.....
HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE BEFORE I CAN BE LIKE YOU?

YOU DON'T WANT PEOPLE SUSPECTING WHO YOU ARE AS SOON AS YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH.

IN WHICH CASE, THERE IS NOT ENOUGH TIME!!
20 YEARS?!

"BUT THEN THERE ISN'T ENOUGH TIME," IS HOW YOU SHOULD PHRASE IT!

IT'S IMPORTANT TO BUILD STRENGTH... BUT I GUESS WE HAVE TO CHANGE THE WAY YOU SPEAK FIRST...

A 10 YEAR-OLD CHILD WITH ONE OR TWO MONTHS OF RUSHED TRAINING WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO MATCH A HUNTER ANYWAY.
AND BESIDES ...

ISN'T THAT WHAT WE'RE DOING?
THEN WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

SIMPLY PUT... IT'S BETTER TO DO THIS THAN TO NOT DO ANYTHING AT ALL. YOU'LL HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF ESCAPING.

OKAY? SOMETIMES IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT SEPARATE LIFE AND DEATH.

SO IF, FOR INSTANCE, YOUR OPPONENT HESITATES FOR EVEN A SECOND, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ESCAPE.
AND IF YOU CAN DO THAT AND FIND THAT KIND OF OPENING, I'LL HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF SAVING YOU.

RUSTLE

THAT'S WHEN A LITTLE TRAINING WOULD HELP MORE THAN NOTHING AT ALL.

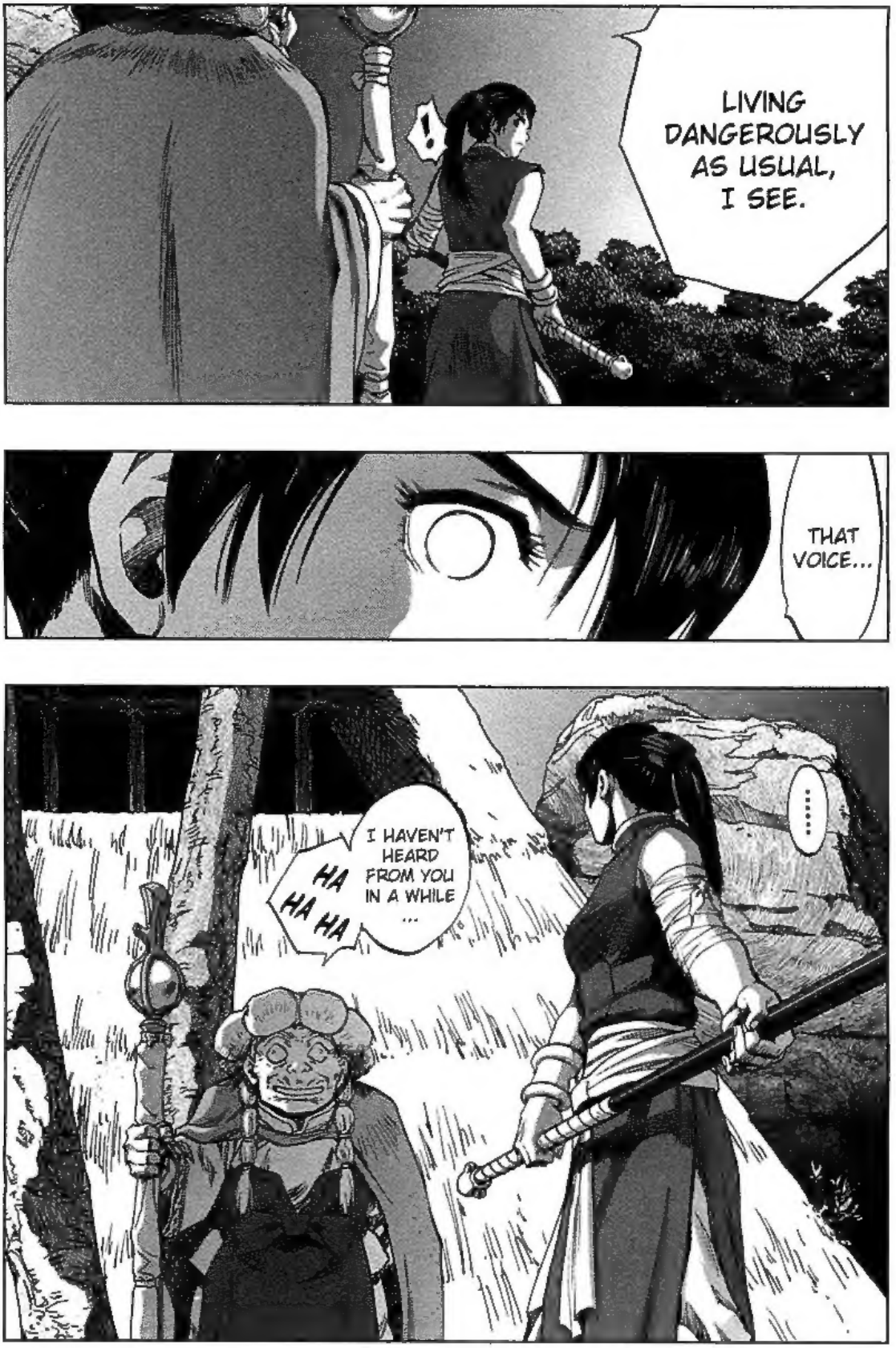
CLANG
A
!!

THWACK
WHO IS IT?!

CHAGUM!! GO BACK INSIDE!!
O... OKAY!

RUSTLE
RUSTLE

A RABBIT?


!
LIVING DANGEROUSLY AS USUAL, I SEE.
THAT VOICE...
HA HA HA
I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM YOU IN A WHILE ...
.....